



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

General Order Number: 03-13	Effective Date: March 26, 2020
Division: Communication and Information Management/Technology	
Chapter: Portable Radio Use and Emergency Identifier Activation Procedure	
By Order of the Fire Chief: Tiffany D. Green <i>TJG</i>	Issue Date: March 26, 2020

POLICY

This General Order shall establish procedures for the use of portable radios and the prompt and appropriate handling of "distress calls" via the Emergency Identifier.

DEFINITIONS

Hot Mic – A 10-second in duration open microphone on the Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department radio after the activation of the Emergency Identifier.

PROCEDURES / RESPONSIBILITIES

I. Background

- A. The portable radio is an integral part of personal protective equipment. It is imperative that personnel have a portable radio with them when they are operating on the scene of an incident or when out of the station and away from the apparatus.
 - 1. For units that do not have sufficient portable radios for each riding position, when necessary, a portable radio will be utilized by each team.

- B. Emergency Identifier capability is a standard feature on Fire Department portable radio equipment. It is designed to provide a rapid means to transmit a silent call for help when personnel are in danger or in need of assistance.

- C. In many cases, when such a situation exists, the sender is unable to include a verbal radio transmission due to danger from adversaries, injury, or other limiting factors. In spite of adverse factors, it is imperative that all "distress calls" via the Emergency Identifier be handled promptly and appropriately. To accomplish this, the following procedures will be strictly adhered to by all fire service personnel.

- D. The Emergency Identifier is a very effective means to transmit a distress signal to Public Safety Communications (PSC). It is, however, only effective when the location of the sender is known. On emergency incidents, this information is normally available.
 - 1. Portable radios are equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) capability. This capability, however, is only present when the radio is able to connect with a satellite. The radio does have the ability to retain the last known GPS location prior to losing connection with the satellite.



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2. In other situations, such as a stop to assist disabled motorists or in cases that may involve a level of risk, it is advisable for personnel who handle such matters to inform PSC of their location and purpose.
3. If such procedures are followed, PSC personnel can quickly send help to personnel in trouble when the Emergency Identifier signal is activated, and the signal is confirmed.

II. Emergency Identifier Activation

- A. When personnel are in a situation that poses danger to themselves or others, they shall activate the Emergency Identifier by depressing the orange emergency button for 1 second. Upon receipt of the trouble signal, PSC personnel shall immediately broadcast the following coded confirmation transmission to verify the validity of the signal:

"Unit/individual radio ID number, verify EI status"

Example: "Engine 855, verify EI status"

- B. When PSC transmits the verification check, all other personnel will refrain from noncritical radio transmissions or telephone contacts until the distress signal is confirmed or canceled.
- C. If within five (5) seconds no response is received from the individual or who activated the alarm, PSC will repeat the message:

"Unit/individual radio ID number, verify EI status"

- D. If within five (5) seconds there is no response to the second call, PSC will make the following transmission, which indicates to the sender and to all Departmental personnel monitoring the radio that the distress signal has been verified and help is being sent:

"Unit/individual radio ID number EI signal confirmed"

- REPEAT MESSAGE -

1. At this time, PSC will immediately notify the appropriate police agency to respond to the location of the unit that activated the distress signal.
2. At any time during the process, the unit/individual that transmitted the distress call may cancel by doing so with a vocal radio transmission explaining the circumstances.

- E. In the event of cancellation, PSC shall announce the following:

"Unit/individual radio ID number EI signal canceled"

- REPEAT MESSAGE IMMEDIATELY -



III. Personnel in the Vicinity of a Confirmed Distress Signal

- A. Departmental personnel within the vicinity of, or responding to, the same call as the unit/individual that activated the Emergency Identifier should attempt to assess the situation from a safe position. If the situation requires assistance that they can safely provide, such as a vehicle accident, they should:
 - 1. Proceed to the location.
 - 2. Provide aid.
 - 3. Notify PSC.

- B. If the situation poses unusual danger to other personnel, they should:
 - 1. Remain at a safe distance.
 - 2. Update PSC via telephone or radio that cannot be monitored by others who may be endangering the personnel who activated the Emergency Identifier.

IV. Notification

- A. Upon confirmation of a distress call, PSC will immediately make emergency notifications. Departmental notifications shall be handled according to normal procedures after emergency notifications have been completed.

V. Resetting the Emergency Identifier

- A. On the current mobile (Motorola APX7500) and portable radios (Motorola APX6000/7000 Series), depress and hold the orange emergency button for 2 seconds until a tone is heard. Release the button and the radio will be in a normal operational mode.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

N/A